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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General recommends mandate of United Nations component of International Civilian Mission in Haiti be extended until 31 August.

* Secretary-General says human rights violations in Croatia much lower in last two months; UN's ability to monitor human rights in region now very limited.

* Tensions high in Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo; additional UN police monitors to accompany Federation police and IFOR troops on Friday.

* Secretary-General addresses Council of Foreign Relations in Washington.

* UNITA leader says he will accelerate quartering of his troops and meet soon with Angolan President.

* UN issues supplementary humanitarian appeal for Caucasus.

* Special Committee on UN Charter begins two-week session in New York.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended the mandate of the United Nations component of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), be extended until 31 August. In a report to the General Assembly, dated 15 February, the Secretary-General said personnel should be reduced to not more than 32 international staff, with the United Nations deploying administrative and programme support. The Organization of American States (OAS) will provide another 32 international staff and the UN/OAS agreement of 13 January 1995 will remain in effect during the new mandate.

The Mission will still have a central office and the number of regional offices will be determined by programme needs and available resources, the

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Secretary-General said. Based on field reports, MICIVIH will evaluate reforms, the functioning of institutions with regard to the protection of human rights and the impact of the human rights programme. He reiterated that, given the United Nations financial crisis, the Assembly would have to appropriate additional funds to cover MICIVIH costs during its new mandate and give assurances the funds would be available.

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Human rights violations in Croatia, particularly in Krajina and Western Slavonia, over the last two months were much lower than those recorded immediately after Croatia's military operations in the area last summer, according to the Secretary-General. He said, however, the potential for recurrence was substantial and the absence of a responsible local police presence was a concern. In his report to the Security Council, dated 14 February, the Secretary-General said the Croatian Government's 28 January report was a welcome, if incomplete, statement of intended policy and operational initiatives to improve its human rights record.

The Secretary-General said continued monitoring of the judicial process was needed to ensure the widespread criminality in the region last year did not go unaddressed. He commended "belated" Government steps to address the humanitarian needs of elderly Croatian Serbs, but said continued vigilance was needed and financial and human resources were insufficient. There had been little progress in the return of Croatian Serb refugees, which the Government indicated would be addressed during the normalization of relations with the Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). However, that process should not delay the return of persons who met legal conditions, the Secretary-General added. He hoped 389 people charged with crimes during last year's conflict would receive fair judicial proceedings and Croatia would even consider granting them amnesty.

The United Nations ability to assess further developments would be limited now that the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) mandate had ended, the Secretary-General said. The number of human rights monitors in the region had been drastically reduced. There was only small team from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), two officers from the Centre for Human Rights, working in support of the Special Rapporteur and the Expert on Missing Persons, as well as some representatives from international non-governmental organizations.

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Tensions remain high in Bosnian Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo, a United Nations spokesman said today. The Serb population was continuing to move out of the area, especially from Vogosca. Under the terms of the Dayton peace accord, Sarajevo's Serbian-held suburbs will come under Bosnian

Government control by March 19. In Rome over the weekend, the Presidents of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) agreed to establish a joint police force to help relieve tensions among the Serb population, particularly in Sarajevo.

The spokesman said police from the Bosnian Croat Federation were expected to move into the suburbs on Friday, accompanied by monitors from the United Nations International Police task Force (IPTF) and troops from the International Force (IFOR). There were already 54 UN civilian police monitors stationed in Vogosca and 295 out of IPTF's authorized strength of 1,721 were now serving throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, the spokesman added. Another 174 were in Zagreb waiting to be deployed.

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The Secretary-General is in Washington today where he will address the Council on Foreign Relations on "The United Nations: changing institution, changing agenda", according to a UN spokesman. United States Congressman James Leach, Republican of Iowa, who is also a member of the House International Relations Committee will introduce the Secretary-General. Dr. Boutros-Ghali is accompanied by the Under Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Joseph Connor.

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The head of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Joseph Savimbi has assured the Secretary-General that he intends to accelerate the quartering of UNITA troops. According to a United Nations spokesman, Mr. Savimbi, who spoke to the Secretary-General by phone yesterday, also said he would meet as soon as possible with Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. To date, 16,342 UNITA soldiers have been quartered in various sites, the spokesman said.

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The United Nations today asked donors for an additional $37 million for operations in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia during the first five months of 1996. The additional funding is needed to address urgent humanitarian needs of refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups. The supplement provides a two-month extension to the consolidated appeal issued for the period April 1995 to March 1996 and allows time to complete a comprehensive assessment of humanitarian needs in the region.

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The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization began a two-week session at UN

Headquarters today. The Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Hans Corell said that the previously 47-member body was now open to all Member States. It had been entrusted with considering such questions as the maintenance of peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes between States and the strengthening of the United Nations.

Mr. Corell said the Committee should consider the Secretary-General's proposals on how to implement provisions on helping third States affected by sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter. On international peace and security, he said the Committee should allow time to consider Cuba's proposals on strengthening the UN's role and enhancing its effectiveness, as well as Libya's revised proposal on enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council.

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